

**Memorandum of Agreement on Fostering Collaboration and Efficiencies to
Address Water Quality Impairments on National Forest System Lands**

EPA Office of Water and U.S. Forest Service

Geographic location: National Forest System lands across United States

Description: The Forest Service manages more than 193 million acres in the National Forest System. More than 60 million Americans get their water from sources on the National Forests in addition to municipal water supplies. National Forest watersheds also play an important role in supporting aquatic species and biodiversity, maintaining supplies of clean water, and providing recreational opportunities to millions of visitors each year.

Most forested watersheds are in satisfactory condition; however, some water bodies do not meet state water quality standards. Specifically, data show that approximately eight percent of all water quality impairments nationally are located on National Forest System lands. Leading causes of these impairments include elevated temperatures, excess sediment, and habitat modification.

On September 28, 2007, EPA and the Forest Service signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) (www.epa.gov/owow/tmdl). Under the MOA, EPA and the Forest Service intend to work to advance a suite water quality related actions that are expected to build partnerships between both agencies and among states, thereby improving National Forest Service watershed conditions and accelerating the attainment of the objectives in the agencies' statutory programs and strategic plans.

The MOA was signed on September 28, 2007. Under the MOA, EPA and the Forest Service plan to meet within 90 days of signing the MOA and at least annually thereafter to develop joint actions items (annual plan) that support achieving the goals and objectives stated in the MOA. EPA and the Forest Service are currently finalizing the first year annual plan. That plan will include implementation of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and TMDL alternative pilot projects for impaired waters that promote innovative and cost effective approaches for achieving water quality standards on National Forest System lands.

Interagency and Local Partners: US Forest Service - The goals and objectives of the MOA are intended to complement collaborative efforts already underway between and among EPA and the Forest Service, states, territories, authorized tribes and other partners, as well as provide a platform for fostering further collaboration with these entities for maintaining and restoring water quality.

Activity URL: www.epa.gov/owow/tmdl